

# Introduction

The West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village Neighborhood Plan is the culmination of an effort begun in 1996 when the Friends of the Junction Neighborhood Association (FOJ) was founded by neighbors who were concerned about the future of the Junction and who wanted to participate in the neighborhood planning process. The neighborhood planning process was initiated by the 1994 adoption of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan had designated the West Seattle Junction neighborhood as a Hub Urban Village. The Neighborhood Planning process involved two phases. In both phases, the FOJ was challenged to involve the whole community in creating a vision, identifying issues important to the community and developing goals, policies and recommendations to address these issues.

## Seattle's Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan, *Toward a Sustainable Seattle*, is a 20-year policy plan (1994-2014) designed to articulate a vision of how Seattle will grow in ways that sustain its citizens' values. The Comprehensive Plan makes basic policy choices and provides a flexible framework for adapting to real conditions over time. The initial building blocks of the Comprehensive Plan are the "elements" required by the state's Growth Management Act: land use, transportation, housing, capital facilities and utilities. King County's Countywide Planning Policies require the addition of an economic development element, and the Seattle Framework Policies (Resolution 28535) inspired the inclusion of a neighborhood planning element and a human development element. The ideas in the plan were developed over five years through discussion and debate and the creative thinking of thousands of Seattle citizens working with City staff and elected officials.

## The Urban Village Strategy

The goal that unifies all the elements of the Comprehensive Plan is to preserve the best qualities of Seattle's distinct neighborhoods while responding positively and creatively to the pressures of change and growth. A key component of the City's plan to achieve this goal is the urban village strategy.

The urban village strategy combines small changes in the city's development pattern with a more complete and competitive intermodal public transportation system, the targeted use of housing assistance funds and planning tools to provide desirable and affordable housing, investment in facilities and service delivery systems designed to serve higher density neighborhoods and neighborhood-based decisions built upon local citizens' expressed priorities.

Seattle will strive to develop and enhance these qualities of urban villages:

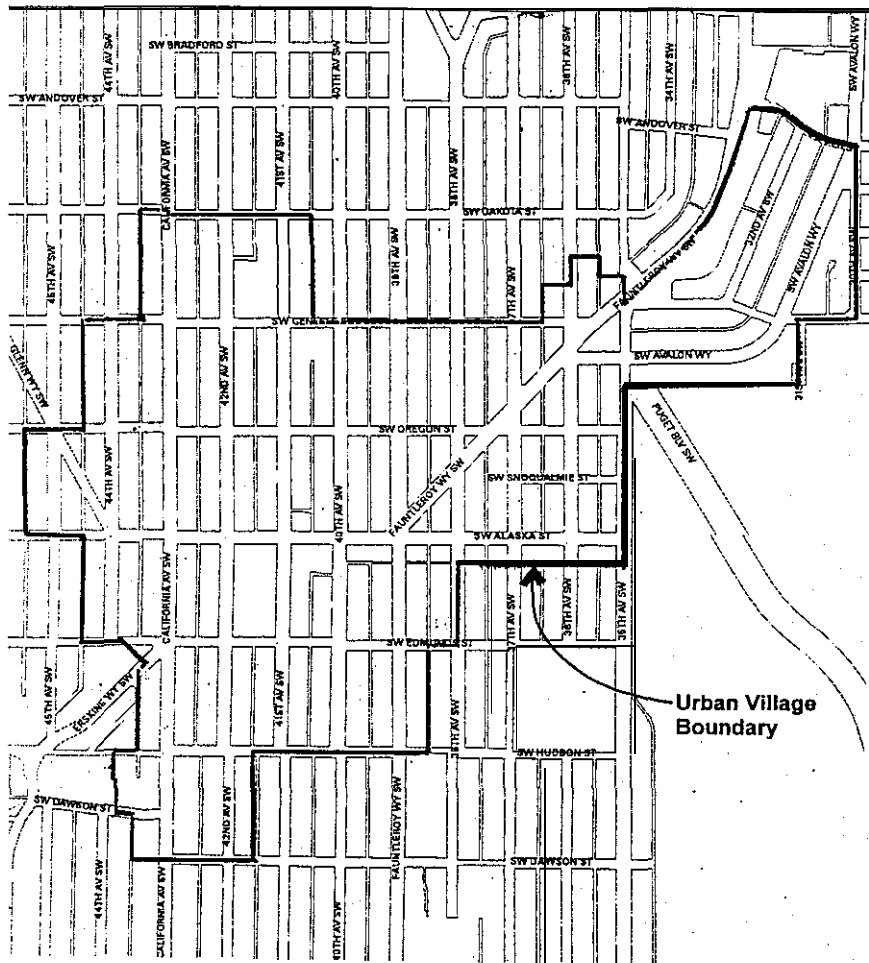
- A diverse mix of people of varied ages, incomes, cultures, employment, and interests;
- A variety of housing types, ranging appropriately for each village scale to meet the needs and preferences of the diverse community;
- A strong relationship between residential and commercial areas;
- Community facilities, including schools, community and recreation centers, libraries, parks, and human services within walking distance of the village core;

- Partnerships with neighborhood and community-based organizations to improve people's access to services and activities and to create opportunities for interaction through such means as neighborhood planning and community policing;
- Transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities with connections to neighboring villages, good circulation within the village and between the village and surrounding neighborhoods;
- Well-integrated public open space, providing recreational opportunities for village residents and workers;
- A unique identity reflecting local history, the village's natural features, its culture and other sources of community pride

**Urban Center Village Designation**  
The Junction Hub Urban Village is one of seven Hub Urban Villages in Seattle, and is the smallest of the seven in acreage. Hub Urban Villages are defined in the Comprehensive Plan as areas that have a core business district surrounded by residential uses,

According to the Comprehensive Plan, the 225 acre Hub Urban Village contained 3,108 households in 1994 for a housing density of about 7.1 households per acre. The plan estimates an additional 1,100 households will be constructed by the year 2014. This would increase the density to 13 households per gross acre.

There were an estimated 3,108 jobs within the urban village boundaries in 1994. The number of jobs is estimated to increase by 2,300 to about 5,400 in 2014.



further community outreach, seven strategies were suggested:

- Complete/publish the community cultural plan

Form cultural coalition to increase membership and recruit volunteers

Engage in others' planning efforts as a way to involve the community in all aspects of art and arts planning

Collaborate with another group in presenting a program in south or east West Seattle as a way to produce a new program for a new audience

- Improve the spaces for arts programs to establish an interim performance space and a community arts center

- Explore ways to improve/ supplement arts education

Develop cultural clearinghouse that would increase awareness of the arts/artists in West Seattle, produce an annual calendar of events, and provide technical assistance to others

## Past Planning Projects

The West Seattle Hub Urban Village Neighborhood Plan is not the first effort by the community to develop a plan for the junction area. Two of the most recent efforts in the Junction are the West Seattle Junction Economic Summit and ArtsWest Community Cultural Plan,

### West Seattle Junction Economic Summit

In March 1995, nearly 50 individuals met to discuss ways to enhance the economic vitality of the West Seattle Junction. The summit consisted of three stages: group brainstorming session; detailed discussion of opportunities and challenges; and discussion of the recommendations and next steps,

During the brainstorming session, three comments were repeatedly made:

- The Junction should have unique magnet stores, more essential retail and services, and a safe and clean business district,
- The vision for the Junction is prosperity,
- The obstacles to success are apathy, inertia, absentee property owners, lack of common vision, and aesthetics.

The participants recommended the following actions to help enhance the economic vitality of the Junction:

- Create a process to improve the physical character of the Junction
  - Develop a neighborhood security and crime fighting program for the Junction
- Enhance public safety in the Junction
- Make the rear entrances of the buildings as attractive as the front entrances
- Develop a strong parking management program
- Make other improvements to the visual image of the Junction properties
- Create and implement a marketing program for the Junction
- Create and implement a business development plan for the Junction

### ArtsWest Community Cultural Plan

ArtsWest is an organization whose mission is "to encourage and develop the arts in West Seattle." In 1996, ArtsWest conducted a needs assessment of the West Seattle/Duwamish Peninsula area as part of the community cultural planning process. The project gave the community an opportunity to voice their interests, hopes, and concerns. The needs assessment distributed a survey and held one focus group meeting and one community meeting. Through these efforts and

# Phase I

## Outreach

From the outset, one of the primary tenets of the Friends of the Junction was that the neighborhood planning process be comprehensive and inclusive. To this end, FOJ developed a community outreach strategy based on three basic goals:

1. Identify, contact, and sustain community stakeholders involvement in responding to FOJ preliminary planning priorities.
2. Provide ongoing community education
3. Create a process for gaining affirmation of community priorities,

To meet these goals an outreach program was developed that employed a variety of methods of providing information and encouraging participation. During the course of Phase I planning, the following activities were undertaken,

- **List of Community Stakeholders** - A mailing list of interested people and key contacts was developed and added to throughout the Phase I process.
- **Small Group Meetings with Video and Survey**- The small group meetings component targeted existing organizations in the community and took the neighborhood planning process to their venue. Eleven small group meetings were facilitated by FOJ volunteers, Participating organizations included Genesee Garden Club, YMCA, Senior Center, ArtsWest, Junction Business Improvement Association, Food Bank, Cityview Neighborhood Council, Pathfinders PTSA, West Seattle Support Group, Tibbets Methodist Church, and Rotary Club, About 200 people were reached through this process.
- **Newspaper Coverage** - The West Seattle Herald published articles on FOJ planning activities,
- **Friends of the Junction Neighborhood Brochure** - The brochure describing FOJ's planning goals and points of contact was distributed at the West Seattle Street Fair and the Neighborhood Service Center.
- **Preliminary Survey – Summer 1996** – A survey asking respondents to rank issues and provide additional input was distributed at the Street Fair and Neighborhood Service Center,
- **Issues Survey-In** October, 1996, a follow-up survey, which incorporated information gained from the preliminary survey, was distributed by mail to 10,131 households, businesses and property owners. Over 1000 persons responded to the survey.
- **Newsletter**- In January, 1997, newsletter was mailed to the same list who had received the Issues Survey the previous October, The newsletter provided information about the planning process, survey results and urged people to attend the BIG EVENT, scheduled for January 25, 1997.
- **Posters and Yard Signs** - Poster and yard signs advertising the BIG EVENT were placed in local shop windows and at prominent locations around the Junction,
- **THE BIG EVENT**- The Phase I outreach process culminated at Seattle Lutheran High School

gymnasium on Saturday, January 25, 1997. Over 200 people came to view the results of all the work of the FOJ planning volunteers, and to answer the question "Did we get it right?" Comment forms were tabulated to document support for Phase I Vision and Planning Goals and to help develop the direction of the next phase of the neighborhood planning process.

## Vision and Planning Goals

One of the most important consequences of Phase I planning was the creation of a Vision for the neighborhood that is reflective of the community and guides the Phase II planning effort. The following Vision statements were created through community outreach and were validated by a community event that culminated Phase I.

- The West Seattle Junction Neighborhood is envisioned as a lively center of community life and an inviting place to live, work, play and shop.
- Our small town atmosphere will be preserved and will serve as a model for future development.
- ∨ The Junction will be a desirable place for families with a safe and attractive residential neighborhood served by a variety of park and recreation facilities.
- ∨ The Junction business district will be a vibrant center of shopping, dining, and cultural opportunities.
- ∨ Pleasant pedestrian and bicycle-friendly streets and a transit center will provide convenient access.

## Goals for Phase II Planning

In addition to the Vision Statement, the FOJ volunteer planners developed goals for planning in Phase II. The community was asked to comment on these goals as Phase I came to conclusion.

### Economic Development

- ∨ Coordinate with the Junction Business Improvement Association (BIA)
- Establish a relationship with building and business owners to spur revitalization
- Develop the Junction as a shopping destination
- Prepare a marketing plan and identify what types of businesses are wanted

### Housing

- Protect single-family neighborhoods
- Develop an affordable housing strategy
- Develop design guidelines for multi-family and mixed-use development
- ∨ Develop strategies for mixed-use, in-fill, and ground-related housing

### Land Use

- Review existing zoning and density standards to make them consistent with housing goals
- Develop design guidelines for commercial development

## Transportation

- Identify key pedestrian streets and prepare a streetscape physical improvement plan
- . Identify a site for a transit center and a development strategy
- . Develop a recommended strategy for permanent removal of parking meters

## Parks and Open Space

- Identify the need for additional/enhanced park facilities and develop a plan to meet these needs
- Develop a strategy for siting and developing open space and recreational facilities within the Junction planning area
- Identify the need and plan for community gardens, green streets, and an overall open space system

## Human Development

- . Develop an outreach plan for Phase II to ensure continued community involvement
- Coordinate planning with the YMCA, senior center, youth, schools, and churches
- . Share sites and locations for public services
- Identify opportunities for location of community services/facilities within the Junction planning area

## Public Safety

- Identify opportunities to enhance existing neighborhood-based public safety programs/resources
- Increase personal safety awareness
- Share sites and locations for public services
- Evaluate and prioritize public spaces for safety improvements
- . Increase police presence in neighborhood

## Cultural Arts

- Incorporate an arts element in the Junction Neighborhood Plan
- Coordinate Phase II planning with ArtsWest
- . Assist ArtsWest in establishing a community arts center with performance space

# Key Strategies

No single activity will achieve the vision of the community, Recommendations from several, perhaps all, of the subcommittees, when combined, result in a strategy of multiple actions or activities that will achieve that vision. Consequently, recommendations will appear both in the Key Strategies section and later in the section of committee recommendations. Each Key Strategy consists of activities for a single complex projector theme that the neighborhood considers critical to achieving its vision for the future. While the Key Strategies are high priorities for the neighborhood, they are also part of a twenty-year plan, so the specific activities within each Key Strategy may be implemented over the span of many years,

There are two Key Strategies in the FOJ Neighborhood Plan:

- . Strengthen the Mixed-Use Commercial Core
- Improve the **Fauntleroy** Gateway into the Junction

Each of the Key Strategies is described below, together with the recommendations that makeup that strategy. Each of these recommendations will appear later in this document in the respective section from which it originated,

## *Key Strategy*

### Strengthen the Mixed-Use Commercial Core

The main commercial core of West Seattle Junction is centered along California Avenue between SW Edmunds Street and SW Genesee Street. The area is characterized by small one- and two-story structures concentrated wall-to-wall along the street, giving it the image of "Main Street" in a small town. The purpose of this Key Strategy is to maintain and enhance a compact mixed-use



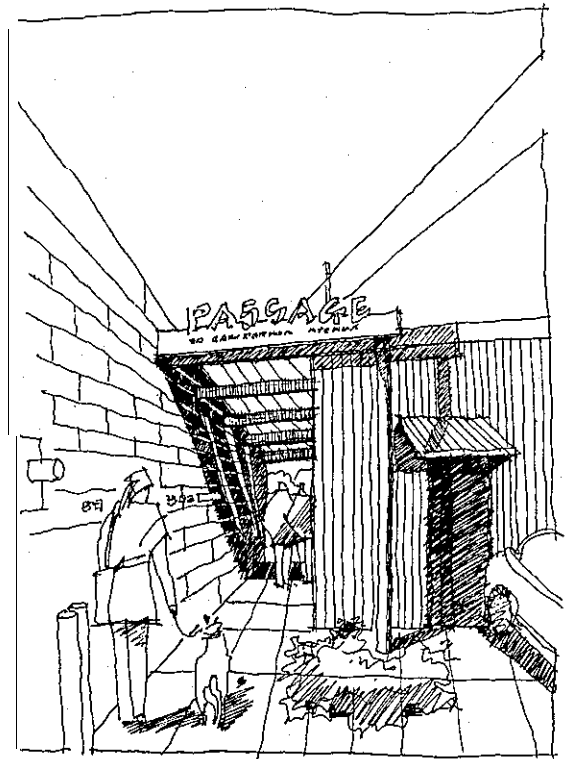
commercial core, with small town character, located between 41<sup>st</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> Avenues SW and SW Genesee Street and SW Edmunds Street. This may be done by: improving traffic flow and circulation; improving pedestrian safety and access and providing pedestrian amenities; implementing a strong business retention and recruitment program; improving parking signage and providing employee parking opportunities and improving architectural image. Key implementation activities are identified below.

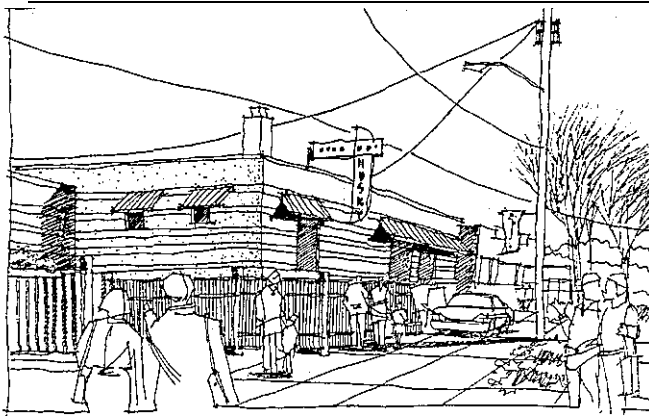
- ◆ Study the best methods of improving traffic flow through the commercial core, The study should analyze such means as lane reconfiguration on California Avenue, improved signaling, removal of the existing "scramble" light, and/or other measures identified in the city's "Streets that Work" program,
- ◆ Study the best methods of facilitating safe and convenient pedestrian access and circulation in the Junction commercial area. Alternative methods to be studied should include installation of



curb bulbs, mid-block refuges and medians, pedestrian signals, a tree-planted median, crosswalks and/or other pedestrian safety devices for crossings at key locations where safety and/or vehicle traffic are an issue. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- California Ave/Oregon St. intersection (safety issues, particularly as traffic is reduced to one-lane northbound)
  - California Ave mid-block between Oregon St and Alaska St (mid-block pedestrian safety issues and traffic speed issues)
  - California Ave/Alaska St intersection (walk-all-ways light creates conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians (e.g. hurrying to get through light before the walk-all-ways))
  - California Ave mid-block between Alaska St and Edmunds St (mid-block pedestrian safety issues and traffic speed issues)
  - California Ave/Edmunds St/Erskine Way intersection (five-way intersection with both vehicle and pedestrian safety concerns and confusion for both)
  - 44th Ave/Oregon St intersection
  - 44th Ave/Alaska St/Glen Way intersection
  - 42nd Ave/Oregon St intersection
  - 42nd Ave/Alaska St intersection
  - 42nd Ave/Edmunds St intersection
  - 41st Ave/Edmunds St intersection
- ◆ Work with landowners and the community to improve the existing breezeway between California Avenue and the public parking lot to the west with signage, art, lighting and other amenities. Identify locations appropriate for additional pedestrian connections that link public parking and businesses along California Avenue. Connections could be developed in conjunction with redevelopment and/or new construction projects,
  - ◆ Work with the City, BIA, West Seattle Chamber, Trusteed Properties and merchants to develop a program of improvements for the alleys directly east and west of California Avenue SW to enhance pedestrian circulation and safety throughout the commercial core. This includes addressing drainage and lighting problems, rear building improvements, and litter control, Improvements should be compatible with continued vehicular use,
  - ◆ Provide benches in locations throughout the business district, Key areas include the Senior



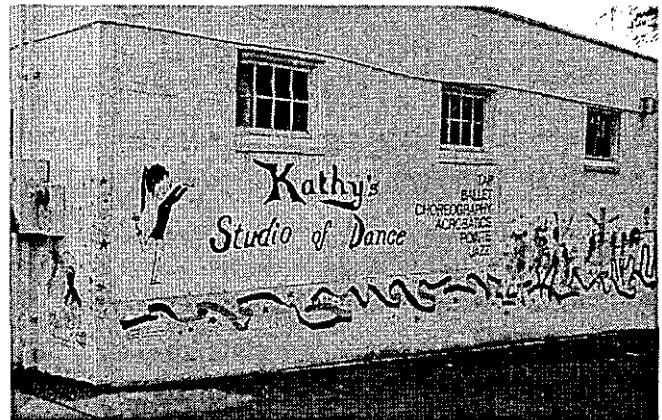


Center, Town Hall and future playhouse on California Avenue SW; areas proposed for public art installation; the vacant area at 42<sup>nd</sup> and SW Alaska; the triangle between the Feed and Seed and furniture store on California Avenue SW; the passageway between California Avenue SW and the public parking lot in the rear to the west; and in the vicinity of potential new green spaces such as former City Light substations (California, Dawson and Dakota).

- ◆ Provide bike racks in locations throughout the business district, Work with merchants and local school children

to identify appropriate locations. Key areas include bus stops and public parking lots.

- ◆ Develop a program to repair, replace and widen existing sidewalks in the business district. When possible, phase in as new development occurs,
- ◆ Work with FOJ, Junction BIA, West Seattle Chamber of Commerce, merchants, and West Seattle Trusteed Properties to support planting and upkeep of green spaces in the commercial core.
- ◆ Work with ArtsWest, FOJ, Junction 61A, West Seattle Chamber of Commerce, merchants, and West Seattle Trusteed Properties to identify potential locations for public art in the business district, Identify local artists and seek their input and participation, Identify funding sources for initial projects and incorporate others as new development occurs.
- ◆ Install public art in the following locations:
  - The vacant area at 42<sup>nd</sup> and SW Alaska
  - The triangle between Feed and Seed and furniture store on California Avenue SW
  - Passageway between California Avenue SW and parking lot
- 4 Continue to work with ArtsWest to support the Playhouse on California Avenue in the heart of the commercial core,
- 4 Develop a program for retaining and recruiting businesses in the commercial core.



*The painted wall at Kathy's Studio of Dance is a good example of FOJ volunteerism and dressing up the Junction with public art.*

- Work with FOJ, BIA, West Seattle Chamber and ArtsWest to develop a marketing packet and promotional video for the business district.
- Explore membership in the Mainstreet Program to support a variety of improvements and tools for the commercial core. Possible



*Well designed directional signs can be informative and add public art to the streetscape.*

projects include developing a consumer survey to determine what goods and services West Seattle residents want, where they shop now, to gauge the number of home-based businesses, and to provide workshops on business recruiting. Coordinate business retention and recruiting efforts with West Seattle Chamber's ongoing efforts and Junction BIA.

- ◆ Work with the city, West Seattle Chamber, Junction BIA, Truusted Properties and merchants to examine existing parking arrangements to find ways to accommodate employer and employee parking concerns, This could include shared use of existing parking facilities and future development of joint-use parking facilities as new development occurs,

- ◆ Work with local merchants, the Junction BIA, the West Seattle Chamber and Truusted properties to provide better signage for public parking and develop a parking map,

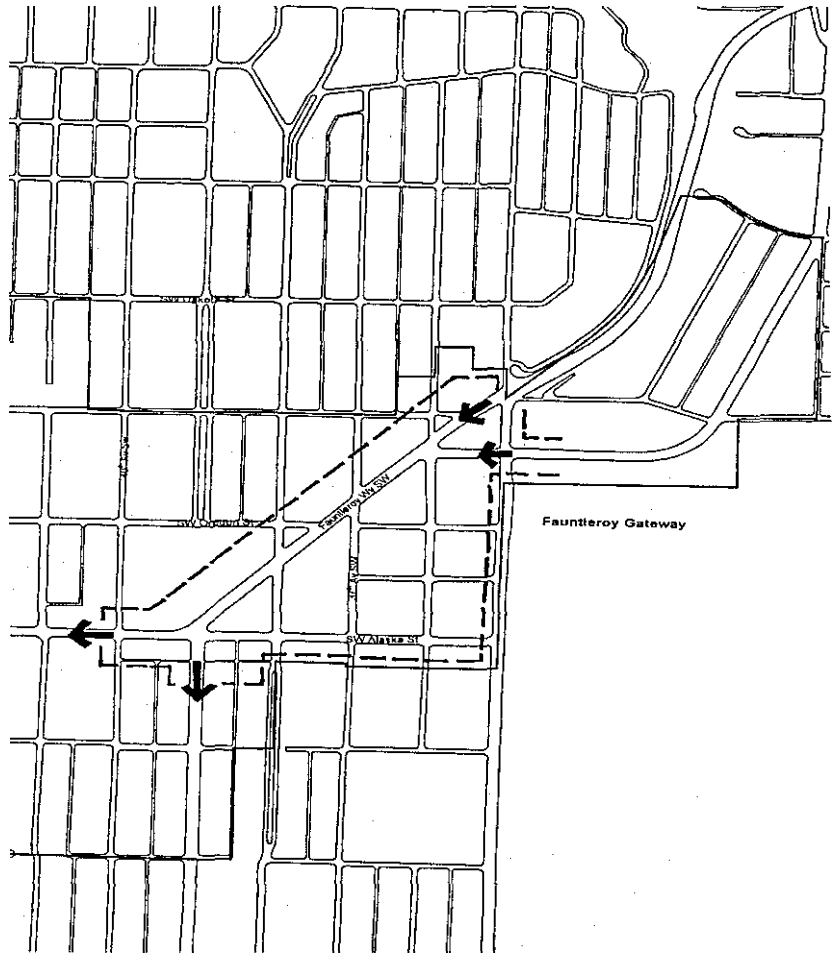
- ◆ Retain services of a recognized and respected designer or planner to describe an aesthetic character and develop specific design guidelines for both existing and new buildings based on Preparing your own Design Guidelines-A Handbook for Seattle's Neighborhoods and input from DCLU, FOJ and community, Explore funding possibilities through Neighborhood Matching Grant. (See discussion of Design Guidelines in the Land Use Section)

- ◆ Work with the city, Historic Seattle, FOJ, Junction BIA and West Seattle Chamber to identify local "landmark" buildings and develop a pool of resources for façade improvements,
- ◆ Consider tax relief and other incentives as a means to encourage development within the defined Village core.
- ◆ Adopt current city urban village boundaries,

## Key Strategy

### Improve the **Fauntleroy** Gateway into the Junction

Fauntleroy Way SW serves as the primary entry into the West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village. From 35th Avenue SW, where the Village begins, to its intersection with SW Alaska Street, the Fauntleroy Way corridor presents an image of a suburban commercial arterial dominated by automobiles. This image continues, to some degree, on Alaska Street to 42nd Avenue SW. While the businesses in this area are important to the community, the image created by this gateway area is inconsistent with the single-family, "small town" character valued by Junction residents. The purpose of this Key Strategy is to create a community gateway that reflects the character of the rest of the neighborhood, presents a positive image, and improves pedestrian safety and amenities, traffic flow and general aesthetic appearance. The recommended improvements address the "entry" arterial system including Fauntleroy Way, SW Alaska Street and the intersections at 35th Avenue SW and SW Avalon Way. The recommendations also address land uses in and around the entry area by recommending that there be an increase in mixed-use residential development and single purpose multi-family development. This strategy will meet the Hub Urban Village targets for increased households and create a "residential village" environment. Easy access to transit and the arterial street system support this strategy. Key implementation activities are identified below.



- ◆ Encourage higher density residential mixed-use development in the triangular area bounded by Fauntleroy Way, Alaska Way and 35th Avenue SW. The height limit should remain 65 feet,
- ◆ In appropriate commercially zoned areas outside the commercial core, allow single-purpose residential as an outright permitted use and/or open space to fulfill commercial requirement (see map).
- ◆ Develop coordinated design, guidelines for advertising signage along Fauntleroy Way, SW

Alaska Street and 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW so that signage will be effective without competing to be bigger, higher or brighter.

- ◆ Provide improved directional signage along Fauntleroy Way to guide travelers to the Junction Business District and Fauntleroy ferry terminal.



*Higher density mixed-use and single purpose residential in the Fauntleroy Gateway area would create a desirable urban village atmosphere,*

- ◆ Develop an "Avalon-Fauntleroy-Alaska" Pedestrian Corridor from 35th Avenue to California Avenue. Facilitate safe and convenient pedestrian circulation through the corridor by improving sidewalks on Avalon Way, Fauntleroy Way, and Alaska Street, and by installing curb bulbs, mid-block refuges and medians, pedestrian signals, and/or other pedestrian safety devices for crossings at the Avalon Way/35th Avenue, Avalon Way/Fauntleroy Way, and Fauntleroy Way/Alaska Street intersections.

- ◆ Improve pedestrian-scale lighting in the pedestrian corridor and provide benches, trees and other pedestrian amenities,

+ Develop a landscaped triangle park at the intersection of Fauntleroy Way at 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW.

- ◆ Provide bicycle lane for westbound movement on Avalon Way onto Fauntleroy Way.

+ Modify lane configuration and traffic control at the Fauntleroy Way/Alaska Street intersection.

- ◆ Evaluate the Fauntleroy Way SW corridor, south of SW Edmunds Street, for opportunities to improve vehicular and pedestrian safety, accessibility, traffic flow, and provide aesthetic landscaping improvements that maintain or improve existing traffic flow,

- ◆ Analyze traffic volumes (existing and future), delay times, travel times when considering potential new traffic and/or pedestrian signals, and retaining on-street parking and bus zones; consider bicycle lanes
- ◆ Improve bus stops and pedestrian crossing by installing painted crosswalks, curb bulbs, pedestrian median refuges, and pedestrian signal in appropriate locations.
- ◆ Improve bus stops and pedestrian crossings on Fauntleroy Way by installing painted crosswalks, curb bulbs, pedestrian median refuges, and pedestrian signals as appropriate.
- ◆ Provide bicycle lanes on Avalon Way to connect West Seattle Junction to the southern terminus of the Harbor Avenue bikeway (at Spokane Street).

## FOJ Committee Recommendations

The Key Strategies combine recommendations from several FOJ subcommittees. There are also many recommendations from each of the committees that are not included in the integrated strategies, but rather are intended for implementation by the City, community organizations and FOJ in both the near term and long term future.

The FOJ Planning Committee organized into six subcommittees to develop the neighborhood plan. These committees include:

- Economic Development
- Transportation
- Housing and Land Use
- Parks and Open Space
- Cultural Arts
- Human Development and Public Safety

Although each of these committees met independently over the course of the planning period, each month an overall Planning Committee meeting was held to share each committee's progress, concerns and recommendations.

Many of the planning issues facing FOJ defy categorization and were, therefore, addressed by more than one committee. For example, streetscape design and pedestrian safety were addressed by the Economic Development Committee as they relate to the Business District, by the Transportation Committee for the overall village, and by the Parks and Open Space Committee regarding "green streets" and the pedestrian travel throughout the FOJ Planning Area. Likewise, public art improvements were an important issue for both the Cultural Arts Committee and the Economic Development Committee.

As a result of this "overlapping" some recommendations appear, in similar form, several times in the Neighborhood Plan. While this may seem redundant, in fact it strengthens the Plan by showing that the community arrived at similar conclusions even when approaching issues from different perspectives and interests,



*Children played putt-putt golf while parents reviewed FOJ Committee recommendations at a Saturday event held at the new ArtsWest Playhouse on June 27, 1998.*